

# The Athenian Mercury:

Tuesday, February 27. 1694.

Quest. 1. **A** Friend of mine in Ireland having had several of your Mercuries sent over, and being pleas'd with your Solutions, desires I'd send you these following Questions, which if you'd give your selves the trouble to answer, you'd much Oblige him, and *&c.* There is in the North of Ireland and only there, an accident which happens very frequently. Those who will believe nothing of Enchantment, call it a Disease, but the vulgar take it to be the effect of a Diabolical Power; they call it *Elve-shot*, and 'tis in the following manner that the afflicted party is surpriz'd with it: They suddenly feel something strike them as if they were really shot through the Body, and immediately grow Weak and Disorder'd, as it indeed shot. Both Man and Beast are subject to this Disorder, and if shot in the Brain, Heart, or Lungs, they immediately dye, otherwise they recover, by using the following method: First they procure, if possibly they can, a Stone called the *Elve-stone*, which is in the form of a Heart: This they think is the Ammunition that the Devil uses against 'em, and their Opinion is, nothing like an Hair of the same Dog: This stone they put into a Glass of Sack, which the wounded drinks off, and then they put him to Bed, and send for Searchers, so they call old Women in that Country who get their Living by searching for these sort of Wounds, which are often very difficult to find, and being found, they make their Fingers meet in the Patients Body, tho' there's no outward appearance of any Wound, the Skin not being at all blemish'd, and on this Discovery and search of the wound, the Patient gradually recovers. This, Gent: is real Truth and plain matter of Fact, concerning which you are desired to be so kind to give your Opinion?

Ans. We should be kind indeed to beleive all this at so great a distance, without any attestation. 'Twill be time enough therefore, to try our skill, or confess our Ignorance concerning the reason of the Thing, when we have the Fact it self attested by persons known and of Credit, with the Names of some who have bin thus affected, and either dy'd, or bin Cured of such Wounds and in such a manner.

Quest. 2. Sometime at the end of December last, I was walking between little Moregate and the Exchange, a man with a Sword going the same way with me, who just as he past me, stooped down, and running his Hand in the Dirt took thence (seemingly) a mill'd s shill. piece, pretending to have found it there, and whilst he was rubbing the Dirt off it, another man in a Country Garb, with a whip in his Hand came up with us to whom the lucky person shew'd his Money, and said he would give him a Pint of Wine out of it, asking me to take part. I agreed to it, tho' knowing their design, and having heard of such Tricks formerly. We no sooner got thither, and the Wine call'd for, but the Swordsman slyly arose and laid a pack of Cards in the Window, which the Country-man staring about him soon spy'd, and took notice of: Soon after a third person came up stairs, and pretending he had lost a Bill for Twenty Pounds in our Room, desir'd our leave to look for it, and running his Hand under the Table, brought out a Paper, which he said was the same he lookt for, seeming overjoy'd at the finding it, offered to call for a Pint of Wine, but the Company desir'd him to take part of what we had already; I having seen enough of the show rose up and went away, but looking back perceived the Drawer at the Door laughing at me. This Relation you may please to publish, for the warning of others, your Judgment is also desir'd, whether the Drawer at the Tavern was not privy to the Cheat intended to be put upon me?

Ans. The Relation shows that Knaves grow dull, being forced to make use of their old threadbare Tricks for want of Invention. For the Drawer, it looks very suspicious that he was at least privy to the Design, which if known to his Master, he were obliged to turn him away both for his own Interest and Reputation.

Quest. 3. Pray favour me with the Solution of the following Question. Whether all men that hang themselves are not Distracted? the Reason of my sending is this, because in any such Case, the Jury Consult together; whether such a Person were Distracted or no? I am afraid this Letter will be sent in Vain; for I have sent several Letters, and never could obtain an Answer: Yet I believe you are not so cloid, for almost half your Mercuries are fill'd with Advertisements, instead of Questions and Answers. I am your humble Servant.

Ans. First to your Complaint — D'ye think our Bookseller is such a Virtuoso as to stuff all his Paper with News from Athens, and not one Word in't of news of Books, but pay for putting in his own Books in other Places, which he may do here Gratis, if you do, he prays us to tell ye you're mistaken, and that his first Motto is *Proximus egomet mihi*, and after that Yours, Yours, Yours, as much as you please.

Now to your Question, the very Terms of it, we think, imply its Answer, for if a Jury Consult, whether such a Person were Distracted, it implies that sometimes such Persons are not distracted, for if always so, what need of Consultation? Thus much indeed must be granted, that such a thing may be, and that it often is, and it can't be deny'd, that 't has been the Opinion of great Men, Divines and others, that no man could possibly offer Violence to himself, were he not, at least in the very Act, under a fit of Distraction: But however this may hold in some Instances, the contrary may we think be made good in many, if not in most. For if we consider, those among the Romans, who when Fortune frown'd upon 'em, out of a mistaken bravery, or rather Impotence of Mind, threw away their Lives, with what calmness and temper did they often do it, and could Answer with an — *Imperator bene se habet*, even in the Agonies of Death. And much the same has been observed of many of those lost Persons, who have gone the same way in our Age and Nation, some of whom having taken their leaves of all their Friends, adjusted all their Accounts, which require Sedateness, and Calmness of Mind, before they have gone about the business. But besides all this, did not the Wisdom of our Laws suppose the same thing, they would never have stamp'd such a brand of Infamy on the Bodies of those who have this way come to their Ends, as well as taken away the Estate from their Relations. The Civil Law goes yet higher, as 'tis quoted by Bishop Barlow on a Question near a kin to this, Miles, &c. The Soldier who hath laid violent hands on himself, but not accomplish'd the Fact, unless he did it from Impatience of Pain, or Disease, or Grief, (or some such) other Cause, shall be punish'd with Death. Whereas the Reverend Bishop observes, the very attempt of self Murther is punishable, and that too, with Capital Punishment. 'Tis true, there are so many Exceptions in the Law, that would persuade one to believe 'twas only made in Terrorem, but if any thing at all be intended by it, that Impatience, &c. must be constru'd as high as Distraction, tho' even then they were to be ignominiously dismiss'd from their Employment: *Cum ignominia mittendus est.*

Quest.



Quest. 4. Whether 'tis advisable for a Consumptive Man, or one actually in a Consumption to Marry? If it becn't likely to shorten his Life? and whether a Person under such Apprehensions does not sin in marrying, when there's no Necessity of his doing it?

Ans. The second of these Questions being to be resolv'd in the Affirmative, from Reasons too plain and obvious to need being mention'd, the Consequence will be unavoidable, that the first and last must be Answer'd in the same manner.

Quest. 5. On the Fifth of November, in the Year 87. or 88. I was on Board a Bermudas Ship, one Henry Fifield Master, then on the Spanish Wrack, on the North side of Hispaniola, when among other things the Divers brought up several Sink-pots and Jars full of Pieces of Eight, and other Spanish Coyn, as we found on breaking 'em; at length a Negro Diver brought up the Thigh-bone of a Man entire, whereon I said merrily, Who knows but this cunning Dog of a Spaniard has hid his Money in his Bones; one of the Ships Company having the Bone in his Hand, struck it against a Gun on the Quarter-deck, which breaking, there issu'd out a quantity of Quick-silver, scattering about the Deck: We endeavour'd to have gather'd it, and found three quarters of an Ounce, Troy Weight, (judging as much more to have been lost out of the Scuppers) which I sav'd and presented to Dr. Thomas Trappam at Jamaica. Now I desire to know whether by any Accident, and what, the said Body of Quick-silver should get into the Cavity of the Bone, and remain there 'till broken?

Ans. Once more for all together, we must desire all those who send us any such very strange Stories, to send 'em always well Attested, otherwise they must give us leave to laugh a little at them, as we must expect the World will at us when we insert them. And this we Confess is as strange as most we shall hear of. Those who write of Mines say indeed that the Indians employ'd about Quick-silver, will frequently, if they are not watched narrowly, convey quantities on't into their Bodies, whence it comes powdering out agen when they get away and leave Work. But the owner of this Bone had an Art far beyond all these, if he could Conjure the Quick-silver into the very hollow of his Thigh, a Place where one should not easily have suspected it: But all the Question is, by what Art he drill'd it in? for had he been in the Tub of Tribulation never so often in his Life-time, one can't easily conceive how this subtle God shou'd have whipt into his very Bones, tho' he might lye lurking in other less solid Parts of his Body. It seems therefore more reasonable to believe, supposing the Fact be true, that a Mass of Quick-silver when the Ship was sunk, fell into the Sea near this Man, (un-

less he had it in his Pockets to make him sink the sooner, and put him out of his Pain) and upon the eating away or perishing of his Flesh, lay upon the Bone, which either being render'd more Porous by its long lying in the Salt-water, or pierc'd by the weight of the Mercury, made way for it to enter its Cavity, the Orifice by which it pass'd being either not observ'd, or perhaps fill'd up agen with Gravel, or some such-like substance.

## Advertisements.

THE Compleat Library for January, is Publish'd this day, (Price 6 d.) containing an Historical Account of the choicest Books, newly Printed in England and in the Foreign Journals; as also the State of Learning in the World. To be continued Monthly, that for February being now in the Press. Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry, of whom is to be had the First and Second Volume of the Compleat Library, bound up with Alphabetical Tables, or single Months from its first Publication to this Time.

THE Twelfth Volume of the Athenian Mercury, (with a general Title, Preface and Index to it) is now Publish'd, Relolving all the most Nice and Curious Questions proposed by the Ingenious of either Sex; from Saturday, October twenty first, to Tuesday February sixth 1694. Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry. 1694.

A Sale of all Sorts of Plate and Jewels, with Gold and Silver Medals, to the Value of 2500 l. Divided into 500 Benefitted Tickets, from 100 l. Value to 20 s. to be mix'd with a proportionable Number of Blanks, that a Benefitted Ticket falls within every 40 Blanks. Proposals at large, with Numbred Tickets at 2 s. 6 d a peice, are to be had of these Goldsmiths following. Mr. Spackman near Northumberland-House and Mr. Smith near Norfolk-street in the Strand, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Marmion in Fleet-street, Mr. Ragdale at the Kings Head in Cheapside against Gutter-lane, and Mr. Luparte at the Golden Lyon the upper end of Lombard-street: Who to prevent all Doubts as to the Value of these Goods, promise to turn any of the said Goods into ready Money, according to the said Proposals, and to manage all particulars in so fair and regular a Method, with all possible Care and Integrity, that whoever is possess'd of any of these Numbred Tickets, may be Satisfied, that another of that Number shall be drawn for him, and if a Benefitted Ticket come up at the same time, (whether present or absent) it shall be entered in a book and signed by the Goldsmiths, and filed up, and the Benefit delivered to him, free from all charge; upon his producing such Ticket.

These are to give Notice, that Tho. Hindes Famous Never-failing Cordial, famous for its Cures for many Years, is still to be Sold at Mr. Robert Dove Cutler at the Kings-head near the Corner of the Minories near Aldgate, and at Mr. Charles Kach a Pewterer over against the George-Inn in the Burrough of Southwark; and at Mr. John Croiset at the Lion and Shugar-loaf over against the King on Horseback on the left hand going to Whitehall; and at my own House, a Picture-Drawers Shop at Aldersgate next the Fountain-Tavern, and no where else in London.

This is to give Notice, to all Ladies and Others, that Mr. Poulet, Living at the Sign of the Pearl in Hants Court in Castlet Street, Sells and Makes all Sorts and Sizes of French Pearls at Reasonable Rates, as also all manner of Pearl Ear-rings; he is very Ingenious in making Wax Pictures both Little and Great; and if any body will take the Trouble to come to his Lodging; he will shew them the King and Queens Pictures in Wax, as big as their Natural Proportion.

LONDON, Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry, 1694.